



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:
JOHN M. CURRAN

Application No.: 10/613,539

Filing Date: 07/03/03

FOR: IMPROVED SYSTEM AND
METHOD FOR FACILITATING PIPE AND
CONDUIT COUPLING

DECLARATION OF JOHN M. CURRAN IN
SUPPORT OF RESPONSE TO OFFICE
ACTION DATED 08/02/2006

EXAMINER: J. M. HEWITT

Art Unit: 3679

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Arlington, VA 22313-1450

John M. Curran hereby declares as follows:

- (1) My name is John M. Curran. I am the inventor on the within patent application for Improved System and Method for Facilitating Pipe and Conduit Coupling. My address is 10560 Fern Street, Stanton, CA 90680. I make this Declaration in support of Response to Office Action dated 08/02/2006 specifically in support of patentability of the invention in the within patent application. I make this Declaration upon personal knowledge and have first hand familiarity with the contents of this Declaration. If called as a witness, I could and would confidently and truthfully testify in accordance with this Declaration.
- (2) I have been engaged in the business of fitting and laying heavy pipe particularly in subsurface venues for 12 years. During that time, in connection with my

occupation, I have become familiar with the level of normal skill in the art in my field and I have become familiar with devices that have been or are in use in the field including devices for pipe coupling.

(3) I have reviewed the references cited in the Office Action regarding the within patent application mailed October 2, 2006 and find them to have no pertinence to my invention. The device in Cohen et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,090,742) is one in which the Belleville washers provide the capability for maintaining a preload force in a bolted arrangement whereas in the application of my invention, the pipes are not yet bolted together and must be held in place by my retention means so that the screws will not slip through the screw holes. Equally irrelevant is the Fisher reference (U.S. Patent No. 4,911,594). I have seen the device in the Fisher reference: it has been in the field for years. It is difficult to work with, operates in a totally different manner from my invention, and is not particularly popular or well-liked. The device in the Fisher reference which has a metal plate with a hole in the middle together with a plurality of fingers/prongs extending from the plate, can be used only by placing it over the end of a screw. When the Fisher device (which is referred to as a push nut fastener), is placed over the end of a screw and in contact with a coupler at the screw hole, it can bind during the process of placing and moving along the screw if the device is in any manner placed or moved off-center. Also, if for any reason it is desired to remove the screw before it is permanently fastened, the Fisher device must be cut off the screw, with a potential for damaging the screw or, alternatively, the screw itself must be cut, with obvious problems. In addition, because the Fisher device is made of metal, there is risk of corrosion and further, the Fisher device is less flexible in terms of sizing in that the Fisher device must fit snugly over the screw.

(4) The attempt to combine the Fisher and the Cohen et al references makes no sense at all from a practical point of view. If the Cohen et al device is in place that means that the bolts and screws are already fastened in the coupler and the only problem/issue is how to maintain a preload. Under those circumstances, there can be no reason to attempt to hold the screws in their screw holes to retain the screws in the screw holes when they are located therein since they are already fastened within the screw holes. I do not know of any construction project where after the Cohen et al device was applied there would then be a retention means to hold the screws in the screw holes. This would be nonsensical.

(5) In contrast to the Fisher device, my invention is not applied over the end and along the length of a screw that is to be retained; rather, it is simply mounted sideways on the screw that is, it is just simply fitted over the screw from the side of the screw. Further, if there is any reason to remove the screw before it is finally fastened, all that is necessary is that my retention ring simply be removed by hand. Moreover, my retention ring is made of thin flexible material which not need be metal and thus presents no corrosion risk. Also, there is complete flexibility with respect to size because my device does not need to be sized precisely to the dimensions of the screw in view of its resiliency and the manner in which it is fitted onto the screw to retain it in the screw hole prior to permanent securing/fastening.

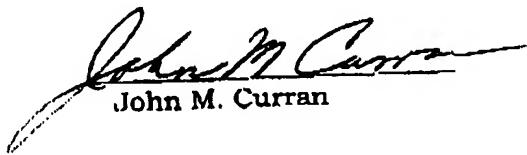
(6) As a result of the foregoing matters, there has been a general dissatisfaction in my industry with devices for retaining screws in place prior to finally securing them in pipe couplings and my device has completely answered that problem and resolved it such that I have had very extensive success with my invention, both commercially and with respect to efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

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I hereby declare under penalty under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed under penalty of perjury this 1st day of December 2006 at Stanton, California.


John M. Curran

Webster's Third New International Dictionary

OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
UNABRIDGED

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VOLUME III

S to Z

and Britannica World Language Dictionary

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EXHIBIT 1

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EXHIBIT 1

BEST AVAILABLE

on or a steamer's screw or paddles) : a surge set up by and following after some moving object or process (as a ship, storm, tidal wave) esp. as dissipated in force or transmitted to a distance from the center of the disturbance (was left swaying in a small boat in the ~ of a millionaire's yacht —Maurice Dutton) **B** : a similar disturbance or wave-like agitation in the air set up by the passage of a storm center or rushing wind (as an airplane) **C** : a disturbance in the air produced by the passage of an airfoil or propeller (the ~ from the prop passed at the loose ends of his coat —Howard Hunt) **D** : the impeded current or force in the trail of an intellectual or social movement or force in the trail of an intellectual or social movement (hard to know how much . . . is solid accomplishment that will last, and how much is the ~ of a tree of opinion —A. L. Kroeger) (travelled there in the ~ of the *Mr. J. R. Walsh*) **13** : WASH SALE **14** : the upper surface of a member or material when given a slope to shed water **WATERING** **B** : a structure or receptacle shaped so as to receive and carry off water

WASH **1** *adj* [wash] : capable of being washed without injury : WASHABLE (as fabrics) (as ~ dresses) (as ~ goods) **2** *adj* [perh. after (influenced by *wash*) of wearish] OBS: **WASHY**, **WEAK** (their bodies of so weak and ~ a temper —Francis Beaumont & John Fletcher)

WASHA **1** *n*, *pl* **WASHAS** **2** *usu cap* **1** : a Chumashan people of southeastern Louisiana **2** : a member of the Washa people

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WASH AND WEAR **adj** : of, relating to, or constituting a fabric or garment not needing to be ironed after washing

WASHAWAY **1**, *n* **-s** *fr* : the phrase *wash away*, *fr.* *wash + away* **2** : WASHOUT

WASH BALL **n** : a ball of toilet soap

WASH BARREL **n** : a barrel in which split mackerel are washed with salt water to extract the blood before salting

WASHBATH **1**, *n*, *often attrib* **1** : a broad thin plank fixed along a gunwale or set on the sill of a lower deck port to keep out the sea —called also *waterake*, *wasteboard* **2** : BASEBOARD **3** **8** : a corrugated rectangular surface (as of zinc or glass) in a wooden frame on which clothes are napped in washing **b** : a road or pavement so worn by traffic as to be corrugated transversely **c** : a corrugated surface (as of glass or wood) **WASHBOTTLE** **1**, *n* : a large metal vessel used for boiling clothes

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WASH BOTTLE **n** : a bottle or flask provided with one bent tube passing through the stopper for directing a stream of water as anything to be washed or rinsed and with means for forcing (as by blowing into a second tube passing through the stopper or by squeezing if the bottle is flexible) the water through the tube

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WASH-BREW **'wōsh-brū**, **'wīsh-** *n*, *dial Eng* : oatmeal boiled until gelatinous : FLUMMETTE **1a**

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WASH-DISH **1**, *n*, *in sense 2* **'wash-**, **-'wāsh-** *n* **1** : WASHBOWL **1** (so called fr. the motion of its tail resembling the motion of one washing dishes) *dial Eng* : PIED WAGTAIL

WASH DOWN **1**, *v* **1** : to move or carry downward by action of water or other liquid : *specif* : to facilitate the passage of (food) down the gullet with accompanying swallows of liquid (bolted a hot dog and *washed it down* with soda) **2** : to wash the shore length or extent of (washed down and scrubbed out with disinfectant, making sure that no corners or grooves . . . are missed out —Henry Wymale) **WASHDOWN** **1**, *adj* [*wash down*] : constructed with provision for washing contents downward (as a ~ water closet)

WASH DRAWING **n** : water-color painting in oil chiefly in washes *cp*, in black, white, and gray tones only

WASHED-OUT *past of* **WASH**

WASHED-CURD CHEESE **1**, *n* **-s** *a* [**washed**, past part. of **wash**] : cheddar cheese in which the curd is washed before being pressed into forms to remove a portion of the whey, lactose, and soluble milk salts and produce a soft body with open texture

WASHED METAL **n** : iron treated so as to remove most of the silicon and phosphorus and not too much of the carbon

WASHED-OUT **1**, *adj* [fr. past part. of **wash out**] **1** *a* : faded a color : lacking in brightness or vividness (a very pale, washed-out blue —Eden Phillpotts) **2** : a photographic print lacking detail in highlights **3** : depleted in vigor or animation : played out : EXHAUSTED (worked from seven in the morning until noon, and I was limp, washed-out —Richard Wright) **4** : SOAKED (coal workings line the route in this hilly, washed-out section —Amer. Guide Series: Pa.)

WASHED-OUT SCALE **n** : WASH SCALE

WASHED-UP **1**, *adj* [fr. past part. of **wash up**] **1** : ready for the discard : done for : played out (as far as he's concerned, you're a washed-up nobody —Albert Morgan) **2** *usu* **WASHED UP** : at the end of an association or activity : ready to call it quits : THROUGH (he was completely washed up in the morning until noon, and I was limp, washed-out —Richard Wright) **3** : SOAKED (coal workings line the route in this hilly, washed-out section —Amer. Guide Series: Pa.)

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WASH-ER **3**, *n* **-(s)** *var* of various flat thin rings perforated places (as of metal or leather) used in joints or assemblies to insure tightness, prevent leakage, or relieve friction —see LOCK WASHER, SPRING WASHER **4** : [so called fr. its habit of washing its food before eating] : RACCOON

WASH-FAST **n** : a place at which material (as wool, ore, coal, or crushed stone) is freed from impurities by washing

WASH-FAST **n** : resistant to fading or discoloration by washing (as ~ blouse) **WASH-FASTNESS**

WASHFOUNTAIN **1**, *n* : a large circular washbowl set in the floor and supplied with running water from a central spray to permit simultaneous use by a number of people

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